Locked-Down, Log-in and Slog-on: A Technocratic Dystopia?

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Introduction

In this chapter I will look at technology and our relationships to it throughout the pandemic. Gilbert Simondon's theorisations of these relationships will be drawn upon by incorporating concepts entwined within his overarching notion of *individuation* and *technical objects* to explore experiences of the locked-down academic. The term *disrupter* is borrowed from economics, to think through some impacts of the pandemic in relation to Simondon's *invention*. The pandemic has financially benefitted very few people bar the very richest, it has accelerated financial gaps by particularly profiting billionaires who invested in tech and tech corporations. Because of social (physical) distancing, it has been said that several years of technological evolution has been condensed into a few months. Simondon is an advocate of techno-human relations, but he has some caveats. A view of surveillance capitalism is discussed, with a focus on the increased use of digital communications technology to illustrate some of the problems of the techno-human matrix and there is a discussion of the experiences of the lockdown for an academic (working from home with technology – or is it technology working at home working on the individual?). This sets the stage for further discussions of Simondon's views on the relationships between the pre-individual, individuation, transindividuation, and technology. Hence his critique of the concept of *hylomorphism*, notions of *crystallisation* and *information* are applied and discussed to further illustrate his central notion of individuation and my use of it to further think through my present existence.

Thirty-odd Years Ago

What would lockdown have been like about thirty or so years ago? We would likely have had in the UK: four television channels, a landline telephone, the radio, Teletext, Ceefax and Oracle perhaps, maybe we might have had an unnetworked PC and some form of video console, resulting in relatively less connected and potentially more lonely and isolating experiences. Perhaps CB (citizens band) radio would have become the staple means of communication and been installed in our homes. Everywhere there would be long arial-rods pointing to the sky from windows and balconies. People may have been encultured into CB (breaker breaker) slang

and all adopted *handles* (CB fun pseudonyms) like *Lockdown Larry* and *The Pandemic Pander*. Pirate radio stations would have been in even fiercer competition for airways (both CB radios and Pirate radio stations were illegal throughout the 80s). How different it may have looked and felt in another epoch. For example, in the present volume, Ian Tucker looked at Camus' *Plague* depicting a historic cholera epidemic in the French Algerian city of Oran (Camus loosely based it in historical facts).

In the present *digital age*, many of us, for example those who work in academia, experienced the lockdown as coupled with a radical *lock-in* to technology, where we all *logged-on* and changed our working habits from campus-based activity to online activity. Suddenly we had to learn to use the forms of technology and associated applications that we had previously been encouraged to use but many of us had avoided. For example, I had spent time attempting to remove Skype and no matter what I did, it still seemed to annoyingly re-emerge on the desktop. I had just about heard of Microsoft Teams as it had been licensed at my University, and I had reluctantly used Zoom for meetings with colleagues from different parts of the UK. I avoided using Apple FaceTime on my mobile phone, as I could never see the point of having to look at somebody as well as talk to them through technology. I had grown up in the analogue age of the telephone (and CB in the late 70s). I would have been travelling in Asia about thirty years ago, enjoying being untraceable. We used to send messages to fellow travelers we had met on the way through *poste-restante*. For example, when travelling to a new place, I would check with the post-office (*poste restante)* to see if there had been any messages on postcards and letters were left or sent there for me. The letters could be months old. Today we live in a world where even students manage to get hold of my mobile phone number and ring me at 7am in the morning to inform me that they could not submit their essay or that they will not be able to attend a lecture. Off grid today is almost impossible.

Disrupting the Bloated Billionaires

In October 2020, a report by the Swiss Bank UBS disseminated some astounding facts. While many people throughout the world began to feel the economic pinch (or punch) of the pandemic and the lockdown, total billionaire wealth reached USD 10.2 trillion at the end of July 2020 surpassing the previous peak of 8.9 trillion at the end of 2017 (UBS.com, 2020). Indeed, the latest figures show a rebound or V-shaped effect throughout 2020, a sharp reverse wherein

what is suggested as a new economy was clearly emerging. The report states that 'the covid-19 crisis could be the real border between the old and the new economy' (p. 12). Billionaires who had tied up their long-trusted investments in materials and real estate have experienced a relative downturn whereas those who invested in technology have seen their wealth dramatically increase. For example, in the first seven months of 2020 their 'total wealth rose by 42.5% to USD 1.8 trillion, supported by the surge in tech shares' (p. 12). Indeed, total billionaire growth rose by over a quarter (27.5%) over the same period (from April to July 2020). It's no surprise that the health industry billionaires' wealth also exponentially grew. For example, Hansoh Pharmaceutical CEO Zhong Huijuan who was a former chemistry teacher, is (at the time of writing) the world's most wealthy healthcare billionaire. Forbes reports her as having a real time net worth of $18.9B. For the health industry the pandemic gave a major boost to billionaires who invested in drug and medical device companies developing, unsurprisingly, corona virus vaccines and ventilators.

Yet, even this industry did not fare as well as the tech industries. The UBS report states that social distancing had a major influence on an accelerated ascendance of the digital businesses. There was a compression effect which comprised of 'several years evolution into a few months' (p. 35). The report goes on to name eight essential technologies that will have 'the most disruptive potential in the next three to five years' 1) Artificial Intelligence; 2) Augmented Reality; 3) Blockchain; 4) Virtual Reality; 5) Drones; 6) Internet of Things; 7) 3D printing; 8) Robotics. What does *disruptive potential* mean? In the context of this report, it means the ability to disrupt the market, a paradigm shift, an economic or another industrial revolution perhaps .5 or the realisation of .4? The finance company Morgan Stanley state that the 'coronavirus pandemic has been a disrupter unlike any seen in decades, forcing sweeping changes to how people live and work', (Morgan Stanley, 2020), hence businesses have had to respond to what they call a *wake-up call* to accelerate digital transformations.

Shifting Sands and Skills

This acceleration has also hit academia, to survive academics have quickly had to become adept at using video conferencing technology among a host of other associated digital platforms and programmes (I have witnessed colleagues who have not been able to transition, decide to discontinue this line of work). In contrast to my former dislike of video calling, I have now sort of learnt to enjoy seeing the contextualisation of the conversation on screen and am sometimes,

surprisingly, disappointed when presented with an avatar. The mediation of the screen, speakers, microphone enable expressions and perceptions of extra-discursive activity of bodies and surroundings that is missed through audio only communication. I've enjoyed watching how people represent themselves in their homes. Indeed, inviting people into my environment can be exposing but adds something to the interaction viscerally. Suddenly partners, children, babies, mums, dads, dogs, cats, books, guitars, keyboards, room colourings begin to add more to the communicative experience. This excess, more-than, contextual activity is hardly discussed but floods into the exchange. Technology can enhance affective engagements. Some people exclude their images from the video but implement an avatar or silhouette, and others blur the background obscuring any visualisation of home life, or they change the background to a default setting of a beach or warehouse or exhibit a picture of choice. These can be interesting and humorous, a tiger or seahorse drinking tea, no doubt stirring and projecting fantasies. As some affective-atmospheres which permeate our bodies are lost from non-computer mediated meetings (touch, smell, temperature), others are gained.

Pandemic as Disrupter

Hence, the pandemic has ruptured everyday routines and dramas, scripts and performances. What should we do at the beginning of online meetings? We knew what to do in a physical room where we met, smelt, got tea, opened our laptops, notebooks, conversed with the person next to us, while avoiding sitting next to another. Suddenly, we are faced with a screen of faces all silent, waiting for something to begin. Will anyone dare to break the silence of 30 people? Safer to wait for the Chair to turn up to begin the *real* business. A *disruption* or the noun, *disruptor*, is something (usually, company or form of technology) that brings about radical change, in relation to, for instance, an existing market or industry. Caroline Howard in Forbes.com distinguishes innovators from disruptors. 'Disruptors are innovators, but not all innovators are disruptors' she states, 'in the same way that a square is a rectangle but not all rectangles are squares'. The guru of disruption Clayton Christensen suggests that disruption displaces what is existing and produces something new, being both destructive and creative. Innovation is more about building upon that what exists rather than destroying, however innovation can disrupt, for example a market, Christensen calls this *disruptive innovation*.

For some conspiratorially minded people, lockdown appeared all too convenient for the big tech corporations. Clearly it was them who stood to make many gains, so it was them who had caused the disruption. The big tech giants: Facebook, Amazon, Alphabet, Netflix, Microsoft and Apple exponentially grew. These giants (or what Zuboff (2019) refers to as the Big Other) have all expanded beyond measure seeking to devour us completely. As Angie Voela has discussed in this volume, conspiracy theories were awash and one that was doing the rounds was that Bill Gates had prophesied the forthcoming pandemic. It is so easy to join the dots here and figure that Gates and his cronies had plotted this all along, the disruptors *par excellence*. It is more likely that the pandemic presented an opportunity to advance technocracies, enhancing disruptive innovation. Much like 9/11 presented the opportunity to enhance the techno-securitisations of everyday life (Lyons, 2003), Covid-19 has presented multiple opportunities that have landed in the lap of the tech giants.

So, many potential brave new worlds have presented themselves to pre-existing infrastructure and foundations. But has the lockdown and subsequent disruptions accelerated a rapidly emerging technocratic dystopia or is this an overly negative view? It is perhaps better to speak of multiple openings, emergences, realities and becomings all serving up a variety of consequences. As in any other emergence we find ourselves with a new complex set of what Whitehead denoted as actual occasions, or moments of being, snapshots of an ever-moving reality. In the rest of this chapter, I turn to Simondon to help think about these unusual moments of becoming. He employs notions of individuation, preindividuality and transindivuation to think about what many of us refer to as the psychosocial. A large portion of Simondon's writings are focused upon the relationships that we have with technology, and their utility in advancing alienation and individuation which are of interest to my increased experiences of working with machines at home.

From Eternal Return to Invention

In Mircea Eliade's (1965) Myth of the Eternal Return, he discusses how ancient and archaic societies forbade invention. Instead they recited mythical narratives of the gods and imitated their practices, thus echoing mythical prototypes. Like Plato's world of forms, creation, for example in Mesopotamian beliefs, was understood as reflecting a higher order. Hence, humans are to imitate this transcendent order, for instance, in the arrangement of the heavenly bodies.

It is not until Abraham's journey into the desert, Eliade suggests, that time becomes linear and humans begin to adhere to eschatology and realise they are capable of progress and invention. The inventor rejects replication and indeed mere adaptation. Instead of adapting to cold water, she invents ways to boil it, 'Adaptation does not change the means of becoming; it merely repeats and reproduces' (Chabot, 2003, p. 20). Simondon's (2012) *inventor* however, is not as radical. She seeks harmony with what exists, even if the invention disrupts. Simondon's (ideal) inventor is more akin to the *disruptive innovator* who 'attempts to find order and connection across the different worlds he inhabits' (Chabot, 1993, p. 20). Invention is the essence of becoming, for Simondon, it creates coherence in a universe that is never complete. Rather than disruption through contradiction and opposition, there ought to be integration, communication, and coherence. Chabot suggests that Simondon was a child of enlightenment in that he was fond of its positive attitude towards technology and suggests that we need to again think of technology as it did as a liberator through developing our relationships with it, a union of opposites. However, centuries after the enlightenment, Simondon suggests we have become enslaved to technology. Invention has led to disharmony and war.

Protagoras famously stated *man is the measure of all things;* Simondon subverts this, *the technical object is the measure of all things*. Alienation for Simondon was somewhat different to the Marxist version of the term. In his first book *The Mode of Existence of Technical Objects* he states,

> The alienation grasped by Marxism as having its root in the relation of the worker with the means of production, does not only derive in our view, from a relation of property and non-property between worker and the instrument of work. Beneath this juridical and economic relation exists an even more profound relation, that of the continuity between the human individual and the technical individual, or of the discontinuity between these two beings. (Simondon, 2012, p. 133)

Alienation here then is the discontinuity or a rupture between human and machine (or what was termed *the human individual* and the *technological individual*). This is more profound Chabot suggests than Marx's dialectics of labour because the 'psycho-physiological constitution of the individual is more primal than the individual's socio-economic circumstances' (40). What this suggests is not that economic alienation does not exist, it does, but it represents for Simondon only one modality. There is a more fundamental modality which is affected by this rupture and that is what requires understanding and repairing.

> If this hypothesis is right, then the true path toward the reduction of alienation would not be situated within the domain of the social (with the community of work and class), nor in the domain of the inter-individual relationships that social psychology habitually envisages, but at the level of transindividual collective. (Simondon, 2012, p. 254)

Simondon's transindividual is a complex and difficult concept to understand. It requires an understanding of his notion of the pre-individual, which I will not rehearse here, but note that it can be understood as a realm of potentials which precede the individual, from which individuations can be produced. Indeed, for Simondon as we will go on to discuss, the psychosocial is the transindividual, a potential future where humans learn to communicate well with technology, a world where alienation is reduced.

Although Simondon was reportedly not a fan of philosophical principles as they tend to curtail speculation, imagination and flexibility, we can think of his understanding of individuation as akin to the Aristotelian principle of act and potency. Things perceived in the world are constantly in the process of moving from one state to the next and are never quite complete. They are always simultaneously in a state of act (being) and potency (becoming). However, it is important to distinguish Simondon's philosophy from the substantialist philosophy of Aristotle. The individual for Simondon, is not a substance or a form, but the process of individuation. He disliked the notion of hylomorphism (being as a compound of matter and form). Form is not some active determiner of passive matter, as if they met each other at some point, but their relation to each other is interior to their being. One could never exist without the other and to dichotomise them is illogical. Being and becoming are understood in a like manner but express either stasis (act) or change (potency). Hence, for Simondon existence is connection. Individuation is where the two dimensions meet, each of which make the existence of the other possible. Simondon had noted how the notion of hylomorphism permeated our social worlds. Everyday discourse positions form as instructing passive matter, it is superior. Social organisations reflect this hierarchy, form (akin to people in power), decide upon what matters (akin to those who are subordinate) and what should become. Hence hylomorphism is a mentality, a way of perceiving the world. Similarly, Simondon understands the psychic and the collective as being intrinsically linked, co-emergent parts of a singular process of individuation.

Simondon incorporates a multitude of complex examples from, for instance, zoology and physics, to elaborate and develop his arguments and his views of individuation. One of the more prominent examples is the process of crystallization. Crystallisation is the process through which liquid becomes solidified into a highly structured solid. Prior to crystallization, exists a metastable amorphous milieu. Indeed, the process cannot occur if the environment is too stable. It requires a germ to enter or a shock to the system, what Simondon denotes as information. It is the point between the crystalline and the crystallisable that symbolises individuation. The amorphous milieu is the pre-individual, it represents a phase through which forces await the process of individuation to be individuated. Of importance however, although it is the germ, information, metastability, or disease that initiates the disruption, it is the collective that helps to produce harmony (transindividuation) from the disruption and metastability.

In the human world, throughout the process of individuation, the individual experiences perceptions, perspectives, emotions and attitudes which are incongruent with each other. However, these are potentially stabilized and harmonized through connection with others. Individuation is pursued by the integration of a network of connected bodies that share significations. This social process enables both psychic and collective individuation. Simondon denotes a form of individuation wherein authentic connections and relations occur which are honest, when we are able to connect with the other as other. In such circumstances, constructions such as, social status, gender, 'race' religion, and culture no longer act as blockages within the connections, and processes of transindividuation take place.

The psychosocial is transindividual. Scott states 'it is the attainment of the unity of the individuation of the collective and the individual' (2014, p. 7). Rather than, for example in Marxist or psychoanalytic theories, the collective or group are considered to incorporate attributes of the individual, Simondon suggests the psychosocial and thus the transindividual, includes the forces of the preindividual (a realm of potentialized energies), acting as a charge for new individuations. The antisubstantialism of Simondon leads to the understanding of the individual as the same substance, or at least, not substantially different from the collective, it means that the individual always carries something of the psychosocial (preindividual) as a

companion in everyday living. Importantly, at least for this chapter, it is technology or our relationship with technology that can facilitate individuation.

Simondon's hope for an eventual coupling or intimate collaboration with technology is detailed in his book On the Mode of Existence of Technical Objects. The context through which the book was written was the emerging cybernetic fold (see Wilson's (2010) excellent archival research on this epoch) which was presented as offering this coupling. However, Simondon, thought that human mental processing of information is fundamentally different from computer processing, and so machines would not be able to replicate humans the way that cybernetics envisaged. However, that is not to say that they could not complement eachother. For example, he discusses the potential couplings of computer and human memory. Human memory is quite different to machine memory, it is for example emotionally driven and selective. More recently, this realisation is something that drove Roslind Picard's (1999) affective computing to turn to affectivity (emotion) when thinking about machine perception. Human perception, attention and subsequent selection is imbued with emotion, we attend to that which emotionally draws us. Machines have the potential to perceive and store much more information than the human, but it has problems selecting what is important within that data, it is relatively indifferent to the multifarious forms of information it perceives. Humans conversely are not so good at storing lots of data, but are good at selecting what is important, being fundamentally and nonconsciously affectively driven. These two facets of human and machine memory are complimentary. For Simondon then, machines were not to replace humans but to accompany, collaborate and live on the same level as them and moreover, to facilitate individuation and moreover transindividuation.

The question then is whether the pandemic and the subsequent lockdown has brought about the *technological individual* who has more intimate, less alienating and individuating relations with technology? Has it therefore, the potential to facilitate processes of transindividuation? Or are we just becoming increasingly alienated through increased corporate greed of the tech giants?

Social-Mediatisation

Social media use is a contemporary example of processes related to alienation. Here the individual user is atomised into deindividuated bits of data to be used as social media content, what for example Clough (2019) denotes as the datafication of the individual. Datafication Hansen suggests, never 'amount to a full picture of integrated human 'lived experience'' (2014, p. 40), hence, individuals are not only consumers of social media content but labourers of it (Zuboff, 2019) and are regulated by it through what Bucher (2018) refers to as *programmed sociality*. In her book *If…Then: Algorithmic Power and Politics*, Bucher states that software 'induces, augments, supports and produces sociality' (p. 4). For example, the architecture of Facebook supports and shapes the ways that connections are made (friends), the meanings given to these connections and the interactions we have with them. *Programming sociality* in this context is different from *determining* it. Bucher specifically borrows the term from computer science (John Von Neumann) to denote, *assembly* and *organisation*. The software and underlying algorithms are 'dynamic and performative rather than fixed and static' (p. 4); they are agents that reproduce, reinforce and embed societal norms, practices and values. For example, they can activate relational impulses through imperatives, for instance, to find and add friends. For continued use of the platform the notion of the *loyal user* is subtly encouraged which entails *friendship commitments* and *social obligations* all involving increased social media activity. Relational impulses to maintain these commitments and obligations include, notifications of birthdays and making suggestions for communicative action (such as, 🎉CONGRATULATIONS🎈). Friendships are then 'measured, valued, and examined' according to selection criteria which strategically populates the user's feed (Bucher, 2018, p. 7).

Elsewhere I have argued that social media platform architectures are designed to not only supposedly fulfil human needs, for example related to so called psychological ownership and self-actualisation, but to create them. They become therefore, not a means to an end but an end in themselves (Ellis and Tucker, 2020). Architectures therefore are instructed to receive data that is easily categorised and chunked ready for processing. Hence sociality is programmed for its surplus value. Writing many decades before Web 2.0, Simondon discusses what he calls the 'obscure central zone' of the machine where

the hylomorphic schema is preserved, man knows what goes into the machine and what comes out, but not what happens in it: an operation takes place in the very presence of the worker in which he does not participate' (Simondon, 2012, p. 254).

Programmed sociality, datafication, and subsequent commodification and associated practices are, for Zuboff, 'a direct assault on human autonomy' (Computerweekly.com). Datafication strategies are designed to bypass awareness, which is the basis for human autonomy. Without knowledge of choice there is no meaningful agency. Similarly, Clough uses the term 'user unconscious' to denote 'consciousness, cognition and perception' as lagging behind data (2019, p. 77).

Labouring for Big Tech?

Daily video calls on Facebook's WhatsApp and Messenger and programmes like Microsoft Teams, Zoom and Skype have as discussed earlier, obviously exponentially increased in usage throughout the lockdown and pandemic more generally. Microsoft Teams collects a whole raft of user data including meetings and conversations chats, voicemail, shared files, recordings and transcripts, email addresses, profile pictures and phone numbers, among other forms of our personal data. When using Teams, we are constantly giving over information. Not only are we labouring for the institutes we work for, but additionally labouring for the Big Other. Nash (2016) argues that in the social media context, the only payment we receive for our labour is anxiety and alienation from the datafication and thus commodification of the self. Elsewhere I have argued that there is a tendency to resort to *surveillance apatheia* (Ellis, 2019), a form of suppressing awareness of surveillance systems out of consciousness. As there is little that people can do to avoid them (e.g countersurveillance measures), it is easier to suppress awareness of them rather than be concerned with them. Hence the associated affective activity, for example, the anxiety of being surveilled through digital technologies, are suppressed, and rendered unconscious.

Hence, it would seem, we are becoming increasingly alienated through the corporate greed of the tech giants. However, that is not the complete picture, there is another side which perhaps reflects Simondon's *technological individual*.

Accelerating the Inevitable

What is clear for me, is that throughout the pandemic, subsequent lockdown and social distancing, production in terms of developing material for the university has exponentially grown. Although I can only account for my own experiences of this, I have heard similar sentiments in conversations with colleagues. I am certainly working longer hours with my machines for my employers. It is likely also to be the case in other workplace contexts outside of academia. Additionally, surveillance from my institute is increasingly encroaching upon everyday life. We have an app for students which is also being used for academic staff entitled *Track my Future*. This app presents on campus and off campus attendance and engagement activity. The data is represented as a dashboard informing students if their attendance and engagement is low, medium or high. It is also a place where students are to conduct a Covid-19 risk assessment to ascertain whether they are Covid-free enough to attend campus. It is a new initiative set by the university in conjunction with Microsoft Power BI (a data analytics tool) where an increasing amount of student and staff data is funneled through. This is just one example of a new technology that we have laboured to get to grips with over the pandemic period. Training sessions are run online, recorded, and engagement with these are in turn monitored.

Yet, the benefits of working from home with our machines should not be overlooked. Personally, I enjoy not having to commute. I find it more rewarding working from the comfort of my home, and hence I am able to be more present to my family. I also enjoy learning how to form new relationships with technology, learning how it can be appended to everyday work, leisure and a variety of activity. As suggested earlier, my preferences have slowly changed and I am now used to implementing video call software and technology into my routines. I have a web-cam, flat mic, speakers, two monitors and fortunate enough to have an office at home. Through these mediums it is much easier to meet with students and colleagues. Meetings are well attended, and a lot of business is conducted more efficiently.

The Betweenness of Becoming

In this chapter I have looked at a notion often put forward by economists of *disruptive potential*. The pandemic is understood as being the disruptor, forcing changes which create economic potentials within, for example in this case, our relations with digital technology throughout the lockdown. Rather than seeking paradigm shifts or revolutions, Simondon seeks ways of

creating (inventing) more connections and enhancing harmony within the circumstances that we find ourselves in, akin to what has more recently been coined as disruptive innovation. This is perhaps a gentler notion of social change than Marxism would advocate. A radically nuanced notion of individuation is put forward by Simondon to reenvisage relations between the individual, collective and technology. To illustrate some of this here we looked at his critique of the notion of hylomorphism which tends to depict processual activity as being hierarchically led (form leading and molding matter). Simondon argued that this creates a false dichotomy and obscures our view of reality and particularly of the individual. The individual is not formed but consists of pre-individual forces and potentialities. In this way, individuation is akin to processes of crystallization: the crystal emerges out of an amorphous (shapeless or formless) milieu consisting of an array of forces. Individuation however requires a disruptor, a germ or information to unsettle and create a metastability. Hence in this way we can understand Corona Virus as that which unsettles and creates a metastability through which processes related to individuation can occur. One such process, one that Simondon was keen on, is our relationships with machines and more particularly how we work with them. Simondon discusses in detail how they can be employed to either enhance alienation or individuation. In this chapter I looked at how the pandemic and subsequent lockdown has changed our working practices, most particularly how it has profoundly increased my work with digital technologies.

Although the pandemic has brought about potential for forms of individuation, it is also important to note that it has brought about many more problems that are perhaps opposed to individuation. Indeed, it may be viewed by many as producing deindividuation. Many have remained in a milieu which forces a socially distanced existence, enhanced poverty, loneliness, loss, mourning, heartache and of course illness, with little means of communication. Hence potentials for new opportunities and transindividuation, to connect or reconnect with others is extremely relative and rare. It is important to recognize this privilege.

However, for some people, as has been discussed in this and other chapters of this volume, it has enabled them able to spend more time with those they are locked-down with (friends and families) and sometimes, but of course not always, enhance the depth of their connections. Additionally, the relationships with technology have evolved as a central node in the mediation of relationships equally important for Simondon. For some and to some extent, it has enabled

more authenticity to emerge between people, something that Simondon viewed as importantly linked to transindividuation. For example, we like to see the children run into the room, the dog bark, the swearing in the background when the microphone is left on. It reminds us of who we are, of becoming human beyond the masquerade of well-worn scripts. But underneath this, or what Simondon denotes as within the obscure central zone, there is an enhancement of scripts, and programmed sociality in the guise of algorithms regulating interactivity, for example, for its surplus value and perhaps devaluing us as humans.

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